

brought to the floor for consideration with reasonable time and access for debate. We were told that the bills would be straight-forward, without tricks or gimmicks. We were misled. The House leadership has continued to play tricks with the budget process. This fall, it did so at the expense of the men and women in our armed forces.

I have the utmost respect and admiration for the American men and women who serve in uniform. My brother is currently serving a tour with his Reserve unit in Europe, and I have made two trips to the Balkans to visit our troops there. The young soldiers with whom I spoke were bursting with pride and confidence, and universally voiced their commitment to peace, freedom and their duty.

With those men and women in mind, I was pleased to see my colleagues on the defense authorization and appropriations committees provide funding our military personnel with long overdue raises and improved benefits. I was also glad to see readiness issues appropriately addressed. Accordingly, I voted in favor of the Department of Defense Appropriations bill when considered by the House, even though I had some reservations concerning other provisions of legislation. It was my hope that, during the conference committee process, the bill would be strengthened and framed in an honest and responsible manner.

Sadly though, I could not vote for the Department of Defense Appropriations Conference Report. Instead of making a sincere commitment to our troops and an honest accounting to the taxpayers, the Congressional leadership in both houses resorted to budget tricks and gimmicks to hide the fact that it had failed to make the needed difficult decisions during the entire budget process in order to stick to the 1997 balanced budget agreement. The defense report designated \$7.2 billion of routine operation and maintenance appropriations as "emergency funding" and exempts an additional \$10.5 billion from the federal budget caps. Through that bill, the Congressional leadership tried to convince the public that a \$267 billion budget only costs \$249 billion. I simply could not support that tactic.

The budget caps were set by Congress to keep federal spending in check and to help reach the goal of a balanced federal budget. House Republican leaders, in an attempt to circumvent the budget caps, have repeatedly designated traditional budget items as emergency funding. Any spending in excess of the budget caps threatens our ability to insure the long term solvency of Social Security and Medicare and to pay down the national debt.

To call routine operations and maintenance an emergency item is an insult to every American. It is the same kind of budget trick the House leadership used when they say the upcoming 2000 Census is an emergency. The taxpayers should not, and will not, be fooled by this accounting slight-of-hand.

Furthermore, pork-barrel projects permeated the bill, including \$1.5 billion for a ship to be built in Mississippi that the Navy did not request, and \$275 million for F-15 aircraft not requested. As Senator JOHN MCCAIN said on the floor of the Senate: "I would have liked to have been able to . . . support the defense appropriations bill. Unfortunately, the smoke and mirrors budgeting at the core of this bill is too pervasive, the level of wasteful spending . . . is too irresponsible for me to acquiesce in its passage."

The House should find the cuts needed to keep spending within the budget caps, rather than using money that should be spent paying down our national debt and preserving Social Security and Medicare for future generations. These budget gimmicks only serve to erode public confidence in the process and threaten the future of Social Security and Medicare. It was fitting that the vote on the defense conference report came just before Halloween. Congressional leaders tried hard to trick the public into believing the government's budget is all treat.

Ultimately, I am very glad our troops are getting their pay raises, and I am very glad needed investments were made in the infrastructure which maintains our military readiness. I only wish I could have voted in favor of the defense appropriations conference report as a symbol of my support for our troops and our national security interests. But such a symbolic act, when in my heart I believed the American people were being deceived, would have flown in the face of the very ideals for which our men and women in uniform carry out their duty.

HONORING ALEX K. "BUD" GEREN

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to bring to the attention of my colleagues an extraordinary man, who will be honored by family and friends on November 20th as he celebrates his retirement from the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transportation Department and Spirit of '76 Association.

Alex K. "Bud" Geren faithfully served the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transportation Department for twenty-five years. Bud also served as coordinator, recruiter, and volunteer driver for MTD buses on the Fourth of July. For Bud's dedication to safely transporting members of the community each year after the Fourth of July fireworks, he earned the title "Mr. Fourth of July." Too often, people who work in the public transportation community are not given proper credit for the service they provide. Without the leadership and service of people like Bud, our quality of life would be diminished.

Bud also served the community on the Board of Directors for the Sparkle and Traditions Committee. In addition, Bud was co-founder of the Santa Barbara Family Fourth Coordinating Committee. I believe that his dedicated service in these organizations earned the sincere appreciation and admiration of the people of Santa Barbara County.

Mr. Speaker, Bud has made immeasurable contributions to his community. I am truly honored to represent Mr. Geren in Congress. I send my most heartfelt appreciation for his hard work and dedicated service.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION HONORING THE UNITED STATES SUBMARINE FORCE ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the United States Submarine Force for a century of service to America. Today, I have introduced a resolution stressing the importance of the Submarine Force to this nation and commending it on behalf of the House of Representatives. A similar resolution has also been introduced in the Senate.

Earlier this year, I introduced a resolution urging the Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor the service of submariners past and present. More than 180 other Members of the House of Representatives have co-sponsored that resolution. I am pleased to report that the Postal Service announced last month that it will issue a series of five submarine stamps honoring "A Century of Service to America." These stamps portray the incredible progress we have made from the Navy's first submarine—the *USS Holland*—to the *Ohio* and *Los Angeles* Class submarines of the late Twentieth century. However, these stamps honor much more than technological prowess. They evoke the selfless service of tens of thousands of veterans who patrolled the depths of the world's oceans guaranteeing victory over tyranny and security for all Americans.

The Submarine Force deserves recognition by this body. During World War II, the U.S. Submarine Force destroyed 55% of all Japanese shipping although it accounted for only 2% of Naval forces. Our nuclear missile submarines, endlessly patrolling beneath the oceans out of sight of the enemy, dramatically reduced the threat of nuclear war. And we can never forget the 3,800 submariners who made the supreme sacrifice for their nation. These are true heroes we honor with this resolution, Mr. Speaker. In the words of Admiral Chester A. Nimitz, a submariner himself before he led the U.S. Navy in the Pacific during the Second world War: "It is to the everlasting honor and glory of our submarine personnel that they never failed us in our days of great peril."

I urge all Members of Congress to support this resolution and show their support for these brave sailors.

THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce, along with my colleagues, Representatives TAUZIN, DINGELL, MARKEY, and OXLEY, the Telecommunications Development Fund Improvement Act.

This bill will resolve technical deficiencies that are affecting the operation of the Telecommunications Development Fund (TDF), enacted as part of the Telecommunications